of Orissa during 2005-06. However, an adhoc central assistance of Rs. 1739.68 lakh have been released in the current financial year which covers the requirement of the State under the scheme for 2005-06. Assistance was also released to Government of Orissa during 2005-06 for the welfare of Scheduled Castes under following schemes:

Sl. No.	Scheme	Amount (Rs. in lakh)
1.	Grant-in-aid to Voluntary organisations for Scheduled Castes	207.02
2.	Upgradation of Merit to Scheduled Castes	186.37

Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Post Matric Scholarship for Scheduled Tribes, an amount of Rs. 100.00 lakhs was released to the Government of Orissa during 2005-06. In addition, Ministry of Tribal Affairs provided grant-in-aid in Orissa under the following schemes during 2005-06.

Sl. No.	Scheme	Expenditure (Rs. in lakh)
1.	Residential School/Non-Residential School	127.15
2.	Education Complexes for the development of literacy among tribal girls in low literacy pockets	110.90
3.	Establishment of Eklavya Model Residential School	1029.79

(d) Further Central assistance is released on receipt of the details of utilization of the funds.

Steps taken on affirmative action

2542. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are sensitive to the issue of affirmative action, including reservation, in the private sector;

(b) if so, what is the progress in this matter; and

(c) what actions are proposed to implement the assurance given for the national programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. In pursuance to the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP), a Group of Ministers (GoM) was constituted to examine the issue of affirmative action, including reservation in private sector, and to initiate a dialogue with industry to see how best the private sector can fulfil the aspirations of youth belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The GoM discussed the matter with the four apex Industry Associations and also obtained the opinions of three legal luminaries. The Governments' efforts have resulted in a qualitative change in the attitude of the private sector. They have for the first time accepted that social circumstances shape merit. Two major Industrial associations *viz.* CII and ASSOCHAM have also proposed concrete steps for SCs and STs in the form of scholarships, entrepreneurship development, skill development etc.

Outcome of negotiations for reservation in private sector

2543. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the outcome of negotiations by the Ministry with private sector managers about reservation for weaker sections in the private sector;

(b) the names of the companies which have given positive response to the Ministry;

(c) the names of the companies which are not positive for the policy of affirmative action; and

(d) how the Ministry is going to proceed in this matter, which is being discussed for the last one year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (d) In pursuance of the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP), a Group of Ministers (GoM) was constituted to examine the issue of affirmative action, including reservation in private sector, and to initiate a dialogue with industry to see how best the private sector can fulfil the aspirations of youth belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The GoM discussed the matter with the four major Industry Associations namely Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII),